

STATE CAPITOL
P.O. BOX 942849
SACRAMENTO, CA 94249-0050
(916) 319-2050
FAX (916) 319-2150

DISTRICT OFFICE
8724 GARFIELD AVE., SUITE 104
SOUTH GATE, CA 90280
(562) 927-1200
FAX (562) 927-6670

WEBSITE
www.assembly.ca.gov/delatorre

Assembly California Legislature



HECTOR DE LA TORRE
ASSEMBLYMEMBER, FIFTIETH DISTRICT

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September 18, 2009

Mr. Lester Snow, Director
Department of Water Resources
1416 Ninth Street
Sacramento, CA 94236-0001

Re: Request for Reconsideration of RAP denial of LA Gateway IRWM JPA Authority (Gateway Authority)

Dear Director Snow:

I write in response to the Department of Water Resources' (DWR) preliminary denial of the Gateway Authority as a Regional Water Management Group (RWMG). It is disappointing that the Recommendation Summary states the case for a separate region for the Gateway Authority is "not compelling." I strongly disagree.

The Gateway Authority, formed at the direction of the Gateway Cities Council of Governments (COG), has a successful record of effective governance and integrated planning for regional water needs. Currently, the Gateway Authority secured a \$10 million grant to improve water quality in the Los Angeles River and is administering a Metals TMDL monitoring and implementation plan in the San Gabriel River.

The Gateway region is a vast area: its two million people comprise nearly 6 percent of the state. In addition, the Authority clearly meets the minimum qualifications for an RWMG as defined in the State Water Code. To equitably address regional water needs, it is imperative that the region maintain strong local leadership in water management issues.

There is a historic and well-documented neglect of the Gateway region by larger County planning efforts. This fact is acknowledged in DWR's Recommendations, which insists that Greater Los Angeles County IRWM (GLAC) "must effectively and equitably integrate the Gateway participants into the GLAC Region planning and implementation efforts." Though a welcome statement, there are no conditions attached that would compel the GLAC IRWM to follow through and "address trust issues with the Gateway participants." Because of this, I am seriously concerned that the Gateway region would find itself back where it started.

I respectfully urge you to reconsider the preliminary RAP decision and give the Gateway Authority its approval.

Sincerely,

HECTOR DE LA TORRE
Assemblymember, 50th District

